

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
AUSTIN DIVISION**

RONALD PATTON #1438891

V.

**JUDGE OF THE 299TH
DISTRICT COURT**

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A-14-CA-1053-LY

**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION
OF UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE**

TO: THE HONORABLE LEE YEAKEL
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

The Magistrate Judge submits this Report and Recommendation to the District Court pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §636(b) and Rule 1(f) of Appendix C of the Local Court Rules of the United States District Court for the Western District of Texas, Local Rules for the Assignment of Duties to United States Magistrates, as amended, effective December 1, 2002.

Before the Court is Plaintiff's complaint. Plaintiff, proceeding pro se, has been granted leave to proceed in forma pauperis.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE

At the time he filed his complaint pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983, Plaintiff was confined in the Travis County Correctional Complex. Plaintiff complains Karen Sage, the Judge of the 299th Judicial District Court of Travis County, Texas denied him a speedy trial. Plaintiff additionally complains of the lack of assistance he has received from his court appointed attorney. Plaintiff explains a witness willing to testify on Plaintiff's behalf moved from the area and is no longer able to testify. Plaintiff sues the Judge of the 299th Judicial District Court. He seeks a declaratory judgment in addition to compensatory and punitive damages.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

A. Standard Under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)

An in forma pauperis proceeding may be dismissed sua sponte under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e) if the court determines the complaint is frivolous, malicious, fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted or seeks monetary relief against a defendant who is immune from suit. A dismissal for frivolousness or maliciousness may occur at any time, before or after service of process and before or after the defendant's answer. Green v. McKaskle, 788 F.2d 1116, 1119 (5th Cir. 1986).

When reviewing a plaintiff's complaint, the court must construe plaintiff's allegations as liberally as possible. Haines v. Kerner, 404 U.S. 519 (1972). However, the petitioner's pro se status does not offer him "an impenetrable shield, for one acting pro se has no license to harass others, clog the judicial machinery with meritless litigation and abuse already overloaded court dockets." Ferguson v. MBank Houston, N.A., 808 F.2d 358, 359 (5th Cir. 1986).

B. Judicial Immunity

Judge Sage is entitled to absolute immunity for any acts performed as a judge. It is well settled law that a judge enjoys absolute immunity from liability for damages for judicial acts performed within her jurisdiction. Hale v. Harney, 786 F.2d 688, 690 (5th Cir. 1986). The doctrine of absolute judicial immunity protects judges not only from liability, but also from suit. Mireless v. Waco, 502 U.S. 9, 11 (1991). Motive of the judicial officer is irrelevant when considering absolute immunity. See Mitchell v. McBryde, 944 F.2d 229, 230 (5th Cir. 1991) ("The judge is absolutely immune for all judicial acts not performed in clear absence of all jurisdiction, however erroneous the act and however evil the motive.").

Absolute judicial immunity is overcome in only two rather narrow sets of circumstances: first, a judge is not immune from liability for nonjudicial actions, i.e., actions not taken in the judge's judicial capacity, and second, a judge is not immune for actions, though judicial in nature, taken in complete absence of all jurisdiction. Mireless, 502 U.S. at 11-12. "A judge's acts are judicial in nature if they are 'normally performed by a judge' and the parties affected 'dealt with the judge in his judicial capacity.'" Boyd v. Biggers, 31 F.3d 279, 285 (5th Cir. 1994) (quoting Mireless, 502 U.S. at 12). In the case at bar, Plaintiff does not complain of any actions taken by Judge Sage that were nonjudicial in nature nor does he show that she was acting in the clear absence of all jurisdiction. Accordingly, Judge Sage is protected by absolute immunity.

C. Habeas Claims

To the extent Plaintiff challenges the denial of a speedy trial or the effectiveness of counsel and seeks habeas corpus relief, he must seek such relief in an application for habeas corpus relief after he has exhausted his state court remedies. Plaintiff makes no allegations suggesting he has exhausted his state court remedies.

RECOMMENDATION

It is therefore recommended that Plaintiff's civil rights claims brought against Judge Sage be dismissed with prejudice as frivolous pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e). It is further recommended that Plaintiff's habeas corpus claims be dismissed without prejudice to filing an application for habeas corpus relief after he has exhausted his state court remedies. To the extent the Court dismisses the request for habeas corpus relief, a certificate of appealability should be denied.

It is further recommended that the Court include within its judgment a provision expressly and specifically warning Plaintiff that filing or pursuing any further frivolous lawsuits may result

in (a) the imposition of court costs pursuant to Section 1915(f); (b) the imposition of significant monetary sanctions pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 11; (c) the imposition of an order barring Plaintiff from filing any lawsuits in this Court without first obtaining the permission from a District Judge of this Court or a Circuit Judge of the Fifth Circuit; or (d) the imposition of an order imposing some combination of these sanctions.

It is further recommended that Plaintiff be warned that if Plaintiff files more than three actions or appeals while he is a prisoner which are dismissed as frivolous or malicious or for failure to state a claim on which relief may be granted, then he will be prohibited from bringing any other actions in forma pauperis unless he is in imminent danger of serious physical injury. See 28 U.S.C. § 1915(g).

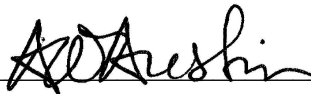
In the event this Report and Recommendation is accepted, adopted or approved, it is recommended that the Court direct the Clerk to e-mail a copy of its order and judgment to the Pro Se Clerk for the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Texas.

OBJECTIONS

Within 14 days after receipt of the magistrate judge's report, any party may serve and file written objections to the findings and recommendations of the magistrate judge. 28 U.S.C. § 636 (b)(1)(C). Failure to file written objections to the proposed findings and recommendations contained within this report within 14 days after service shall bar an aggrieved party from de novo review by the district court of the proposed findings and recommendations and from appellate review of factual findings accepted or adopted by the district court except on grounds of plain error or manifest injustice. Douglass v. United Servs. Auto. Assoc., 79 F.3d 1415 (5th Cir. 1996)(en banc); Thomas v. Arn, 474 U.S. 140, 148 (1985); Rodriguez v. Bowen, 857 F.2d 275, 276-277 (5th Cir. 1988).

To the extent that a party has not been served by the Clerk with this Report and Recommendation electronically, pursuant to the CM/ECF procedures of this District, the Clerk is ORDERED to mail such party a copy of this Report and Recommendation by certified mail, return receipt requested.

SIGNED this 19th day of December, 2014.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Austin", is written over a horizontal line.

ANDREW W. AUSTIN
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE